



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Office of Communications • 1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250-1300 • Voice: (202) 720-4623 • Email: oc.news@usda.gov • Web: <http://www.usda.gov>

Release No. 0275.05

Ed Loyd (202) 720-622
Stevin Westcott (202) 720-7962

**USDA DESIGNATES COUNTIES IN ILLINOIS AS
AGRICULTURAL DISASTER AREAS**
Decision Allows Farmers and Ranchers to Apply for USDA Assistance

WASHINGTON, July 27, 2005 –Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns today designated counties in Illinois as primary agricultural disaster areas.

"I am very pleased that USDA is able to offer this assistance to Illinois farmers and ranchers struggling due to the drought and look forward to visiting with them in the near future," said Johanns. "Speaker Hastert has been very helpful in bringing to my attention information about the severity of this drought and moving this process forward."

The 93 the following counties were designated as primary disaster areas due to drought:

Adams, Boone, Brown, Bureau, Calhoun, Carroll, Cass, Champaign, Clark, Clay, Clinton, Coles, Cook, Crawford, Cumberland, De Kalb, De Witt, Douglas, Du Page, Edgar, Edwards, Effingham, Fayette, Ford, Fulton, Gallatin, Greene, Grundy, Hamilton, Hardin, Henderson, Henry, Iroquois, Jackson, Jasper, Jefferson, Jersey, Jo Daviess, Johnson, Kane, Kankakee, Kendall, Knox, La Salle, Lake, Lawrence, Lee, Livingston, Logan, Macoupin, Madison, Marion, Marshall, Mason, Massac, McDonough, McHenry, McLean, Menard, Mercer, Monroe, Morgan, Moultrie, Ogle, Peoria, Perry, Piatt, Pike, Pope, Putnam, Randolph, Richland, Rock Island, Saline, Sangamon, Schuyler, Scott, Shelby, St. Clair, Stark, Stephenson, Tazewell, Vermilion, Wabash, Warren, Washington, Wayne, White, Whiteside, Will, Williamson, Winnebago, Woodford

Also eligible because they are contiguous are the following eight counties:

Bond, Christian, Franklin, Hancock, Macon, Montgomery, Pulaski, Union

Alexander county is the only county in the state that will not be eligible for emergency loans as a result of this declaration.

These counties were designated on July 27, 2005, making all qualified farm operators eligible for low-interest emergency (EM) loans from the Farm Service Agency (FSA), provided eligibility requirements are met. Farmers in eligible counties have eight months from the date of the declaration to apply for the loans to help cover part of their actual losses. FSA will consider each loan application on its own merits, taking into account the extent of losses, security available and repayment ability. FSA has a variety of programs available, in addition to the emergency loan program, to help eligible farmers recover from adversity.

USDA has also made other programs available to assist farmers and ranchers, including the Emergency Conservation Program, Federal Crop Insurance and the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program.

Interested farmers may contact their local USDA Service Centers for further information on eligibility requirements and application procedures for these and other programs. Additional information is also available online at: <http://disaster.fsa.usda.gov>.